BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

(Continued from Ninth Page.)

Ten years afterward he read before you a supplementary paper entitled, "The Money Problem Again," which was perhaps more easily understood by the popular mind, but the first series was of greater importance historically.

I had proposed to myself to insert here an abstract of certain pages from the "Money Problem," in which I was interested, but it occurs to me that, while I am not competent to generalize profitably upon the subject, the members of the society are all familiar with Dr. Bronson's financial views as set forth so fully in the valuable papers he has from time to time presented here. A financial authority, and a close student of political economy, whose intimate relations with Dr. Bronson qualified him to form a valuable opinion, said of him:

"He took a deep interest in the currency question during the whole period between the passage of the legal-tender act and the resumption of specie payments. To him it was a practical question of the deepest import, affecting in the most serious manner the prosperity, welfare and happiness of the people of this country.

He clearly foresaw the dreadful evils and disasters that must inevitably result from that legislation.

There was never any doubt in his mind, from the day that measure passed congress, until the final catastrophe, as to what the result of that legislation would be. He condemned it as an economic blunder of the greatest magnitude, but it was more than that to him; and as a patriot he felt and deplored the injury it was to be to our finances through the evils growing out of the war; and as a man he sympathized with those who lost their property by the insidious working of an irredeemable legal-tender paper money; and because most of them would never comprehend how their misfortunes came upon them.

*Mr. George A. Butler.

Favored as he was by fortune and the circumstances of his birth—surrounded by the happy results of wise and successful mechanical combinations, pushed to the utmost limits of artistic development by abundant capital and skill, we can see by what an easy grade he became wealthy without exertion.

Forming his views of finance in such a school, where every scrap of metal was made to yield up its equivalent of the gold basis that was in it, he could have come naturally to no other conviction than the one he so often expressed in respect to the financial conduct of our late war; that the war could have been as speedily and as successfully brought to a conclusion on a specie basis as it was on a basis of paper money—in either case the accumulation of an immense debt was the inevitable result. The opinions of wise men differed widely, however, on this question, and do still differ, but it is probable that the majority of our people favored the use of a green-back currency.

Dr. Bronson attached himself to the Herbert Spencer school of political economists. They agree in their statements as to the shockingly deplorable condition in which are all existing things—church and state and social organizations. They leave us in no doubt as to what really ought to be the actual condition of the entire population of the world. But they give us no idea of what is a possible and practical working plan, by means of which all peoples can be placed on the same elevated plane, in such relations as to secure to them universal happiness.

Just at this point we may perhaps be able to trace the beginning of a quality of his mind, which, while it was not accompanied by any of those absurd vagaries that are commonly supposed by the weak to indicate the adoption of infidel principles, and by which physicians are thought to be too easily influenced, there was in the constitution of his mind a notable absence of the element of faith as understood by the Christian world—that "faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Supplying its place perhaps, if that were possible, we find an absorbing reverence for the law and the testimony.

His first requirement was for the facts—the proofs—and from these he deduced the law. There was in his being no sentiment or shadow of irreligion. His soul was devout and his whole life without reproach. He was honest, natural and simple-minded in all his ways. True in everything which a good conscience might approve, he abhorred and detested deceitful men, and shams of every sort. Familiar by protracted and repeated systematic study with history, theology and party politics, he had no affinities with the two last—considering them as resting upon changeable and insecure foundations, and as not essential to the highest welfare of mankind.

Dr. Bronson was always deeply and intelligently interested in securing for all the people, free of cost, the best common school education by the best teachers that could be procured. Such an education as would best harmonise with the tastes, habits and mental needs of the majority of our people; and for them he was always a strenuous advocate of a better education, and of a much more practical kind than was commonly afforded anywhere. But he was also a decided opponent of the imaginative schemes of those dreamers, none too well educated themselves, who desired to see all our common schools grouped around Yale college—and so conformed as to constitute the integral parts of a great university, inter-dependent upon each other—while the powerfully attractive force of the great central body causing its satellites to revolve in regular obits about it, would represent in full operation what has come now to be known in some circles as the "University-extension" plan—by which incentives to acquire the elements of a liberal education—a mere smattering of universal knowledge—are held out to all as most desirable irrespective of their needs, or of their capacities to receive an education.

The disappointing and unsatisfying fruits of this system, designed to offer to all our youth a free classical and scientific education, are to-day painfully apparent; and our present system of free High-school education has come to be deprecated by an increasing number of the best informed minds as a system of education that does not educate—and as being in no sense adapted to supply the vital needs of that large class whose lot in life will compel them to earn their support by manual labor or its equivalent. For entertaining and defending these views he was violently assailed by anonymous but well known persons, whose unwillingness to endorse their crude notions by printing them over their true signatures can no longer be regarded with surprise. But he was sustained as to the intrinsic validity of his opinions by his abiding conviction that whatever theories men may adopt concerning the development of the human intellect, any departures from the laws of mind, in the natural processes of its growth, can only result in irreparable injury and disappointment.

And now the melancholy pleasure is allowed to those who labored by his side so many years ago in the interests of true education, to note on every hand expressions of useless regrets that his wise counsels were not permitted to prevail.

While Dr. Bronson's mental powers, both analytical and synthetical, were naturally of a high order, they were largely increased by the incessant demands made upon them. Their growth, under the general law, being stimulated by these demands for work, and by the performance of it.

With a retentive memory for facts, he possessed in a marked degree what is known as the scientific mind—and having been always a student of the physical sciences, he was capable of justly considering from almost any point of view the physical problems that might be presented to it.

It was also true that he had a judicial mind—a mind fortified by a comprehensive knowledge of the principles of jurisprudence, as well as of statutory law. So that, if he had not been the great physician that he was, in the broadest sense of that term, it naturally follows that he would have chosen the legal profession, and would have become a famous constitutional lawyer—or one of the distinguished jurists of our land—and could have worn with adequate dignity and grace the honors of its highest judicial position.

In view of his great natural endowments, such a conclusion might have been foreshadowed in the masterful manner in which he used the English language—in his critical choice of words—in the judgment and good taste shown in the formation of his sentences—in the strategical skill with which his arguments were constructed and applied. In the convincing power of his rhetoric and the accumulating force of language, increased by his very deliberate manner of utterance, all combining to compel, as it were, his auditors to adopt as their own the conclusions previously reached through the logical deductions of his own mind.

It is almost half a century since the day I was first made known to him, and I remember the occasion as though it were but yesterday.

And during all this long period of close and almost daily intercourse there was never even the shadow of a cloud between us. It was a period of confiding and unbroken friendship which was to me most delightful and profitable.

Honest, natural and simple in his character and tastes—sincere in every manifestation—unreserved in all declarations of his opinions if he uttered them at all—loyal to every known duty or obligation, his simple word could not be strengthened by his bond.

His business transactions were conducted with exactness of accounting and upon a basis of strictest integrity; while he would retain nothing that could be rightfully claimed by another.

Respected and admired by his own profession, he enjoyed in an unusual degree the public esteem and confidence.

Like other men of wealth who have suffered in the estimation of the public, whom they did not take into their confidence in the management of their affairs, and whose right hand has not been permitted to know what was done by his left hand—who preferred in other words to keep his private affairs from the public knowledge, Dr. Bronson was regarded by some who did not know him well as being parsimonious.

In my judgment of his character nothing could well be farther from the truth. He knew the value of money; he also knew the average qualities of men.

Moreover, he was not ignorant of the injuries so often sustained by communities and individuals through thoughtless benefactions for objects which were either not then needed, or which communities and individuals could well enough provide for themselves. With his right hand he gave to Yale college eighty-six thousand dollars toward founding a professorship of Comparative Anatomy and Physiology; to the New Haven Hospital he gave twenty thousand dollars; and to the hospital at Waterbury he gave ten thousand dollars.

But with his left hand he privately distributed annually thousands of dollars among needy people more or less, not at all related to him; and the continuance of these pensions and legacies remains a verbal charge upon his estate, and is voluntarily assumed by his heirs. Mortgages upon property of other needy friends, upon which he had for years paid the interest, are no longer to be found. In other cases permanent repairs to homesteads were ordered, no one knew by whom. And in still other directions the landscape has been made to blossom under the beneficent guidance of his bounteous left hand, and many grateful hearts have been made glad.

TRUE.

A Slight Difference.—Rural Magistrate—Konrad, you are charged with committing an assault on the night watchman. Konrad—I only threw his jacket behind the stove. Night Watchman—Yes, your worship; but I was inside the jacket.—Dorfbarbier.

Binks—Say, Jinks, people are saying that you lived out west under an assumed name. Jinks—It's a lie, an infamous lie, sir. "You were known there as Mr. Jimson, weren't you?" "Jimson is my real name. My present name is assumed."—New York Weekly.

"I have kinder had my doubts," said Mr. Jason, as he removed his Sunday best suit after his visit to the city, "I kinder have my doubts whether Brother Bill's son tuk me around and showed me the town, or whether he showed the town to me."—Indianapolis Journal.

Miss X—I'm going to send this item about our 5 o'clock tea to the Weekly Gossiper. Miss X.—They won't take it. You've written on both sides of the paper. Miss X.—Dear me, I don't see why they need be so stiff about it. They print on both sides of their own paper, don't they?—Roxbury Gazette.

Mr. Billus—Maria, how does it happen that Fanny isn't going to church with you this morning? Mrs. Billus—You know as well as I do, John, that when Bessie and Kate and I go to church somebody has got to stay at home. There isn't room for four pairs of sleeves in our pew.—Chicago Tribune.

Man and His Model.

[By Anthony Hope in the English Illustrated Magazine.]

We had been discussing fame and its rewards. We assumed that we, each and all of us had attained eminence, and, we speculated on the honor that we should elect to receive from a gracious sovereign and a grateful country. Some chose the Garter, others an earldom, others a pecuniary grant; but Colonel Holborow would have none of these. He pooh-poohed them, and bringing his fist down on the table he declared:

"There is only one indisputable and supreme mark of greatness."

"And what is that?" asked one of us.

"Why, to be in the waxworks," said he

"True! true!" we cried; but I added, sadly, "But it is almost impossible to achieve, unless you commit a murder."

"I don't know about that," said Jack Dexter, who had up to that moment taken no part in the conversation. "I'm in a wax-works show myself—not in London, you know, but—well, have any of you fellows visited Petersburg?"

We all admitted that we had not.

"Ah, then you haven't seen my image," said Jack regretfully. "It's in Madame Marribon's famous exhibition there."

"But, my dear Jack," said the colonel, "how in the world did it come about?"

"It's rather a curious story," said Jack. "I'll tell it to you, if you'll all promise that it shall go no farther. You won't mind if I don't mention names?"

We promised discretion, and said that we should be quite satisfied with A, B, C, or X, Y, Z, or such other symbols as Jack chose to adopt.

"Well," he began, after a pull at his whisky and water, "when I was a few years younger, and a good deal more foolish than I am now—it was before that affair about Lady Mary Fitzmoine that I told you of the other day—I spent a winter at Petersburg, and there I made the acquaintance of one of the most beautiful women who, I suppose, ever lived."

Jack paused to allow the sensation to take full effect; but we showed no surprise, and with a slight frown he continued:

"I'll call her the Princess X.—Princess Nadia X. She was married to a grumpy wretch who held a high position in the police, and treated her, upon my word, little better than if she had been a Nihilist. I pitied her. I must admit—I am among gentlemen—that I also admired her, and that a warm, although perfectly honorable attachment sprang up between us. Her husband was, however, savagely and unreasonably jealous, and what with him, his spies, and his mother (the worst spy of all), it was with the utmost difficulty that I succeeded in seeing anything of the princess. I dared not call at her house more than once a month, and I was driven—positively driven—to a thing for which I entertain the greatest dislike. I was, I say, compelled to make arrangements which insured my being present at various places of public resort—picture galleries and the like—at the times which the princess selected for visiting them. By these means we were enabled to enjoy many most charming conversations, and it was my privilege to support and sustain the princess in the very trying circumstances in which her lot was cast. I did this, I need not say, at very considerable risk. I was not blind to the danger I ran. Her husband wielded large and secret powers—save that I was an English subject, I was entirely powerless against him; and it would have been a long time before the voice of a prisoner in the fortress of Peter and Paul reached the ears of the foreign office. However, I took the risk. Nadia needed me, and that was enough.'

"But of all our rendezvous, there was none which we found more convenient and suitable than Madame Marribon's waxwork exhibition. It was a long way from the princess' residence, in an unfashionable quarter of the town, and was frequented mainly by persons who did not move in society, and were quite unfamiliar with faces as well known in the great world as those of the princess and myself. Our only danger arose from the maid-servants of our acquaintances and from the police; but by avoiding the gallery in which the figures of murderers and other criminals were exhibited, we reduced this peril to a minimum—for, of course, the servants were attracted by the criminals, and the police were attracted by the servants. Our favorite nook was beside a group of savants of European reputation, and immediately behind the prime ministers of Europe. This spot we usually had quite to ourselves.

"Well, one day we were sitting there. Poor Nadia had for a moment forgotten her trouble, and was talking with the rare wit and brilliancy which marked her conversation when she was in good spirits. I was keeping up the ball of talk as well as I could, and was gazing, not, I hope, too passionately, at her incomparable complexion and magnificent dark eyes—like deep water seen by moonlight, they were. Dear, dear!"

Jack paused for a moment and took a sip from his glass. We sipped sympathetically, and he regained his composure.

"Suddenly, just as I was telling the princess a most interesting occurrence which had befallen me on the journey out and brought me into contact with a person whose name you would all know if I were to mention it, the princess gave a startled little cry.

"'What's the matter, my dearest princess?' I asked.

"She pointed to the other end of the gallery.

"'It's my husband's mother,' she whispered. She must have had a suspicion and followed us. What shall I do?'

"I looked, and perceived a large and stately old lady in gold eye-glasses approaching us. There was but one door to the gallery, and the approach to that was barred by the princess' mother-in-law. In another moment she would be upon us, and, although I knew her to be near-sighted, I could not hope that she would fail to recognize Nadia. If something were not at once, we were ruined.

"Now I never boast or make myself out cleverer than I am. I admit freely that I was at my wits' end. I could do nothing and think of nothing. Our salvation was due not to me, but to the quick woman's wit which lay in Nadia's perfect little head.

"'Quick!' she whispered. 'Step up on the platform—there—beside Kant. Fold your arms. Frown. That's right. What's that society you told me you belonged to—the one that has the animals?'

"'The Zoological,' I answered.

"'Yes, that's it. Stand quite still.'

"I obeyed her, and she seized from the feet of Isaac Newton a placard bearing a notice in Russian and French: 'It is strictly forbidden to touch the figures. Offenders will be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law,' (not a light matter, mind you, in Russia.) She propped the board up against my legs, whispered, 'Be sure you don't wink!' and with a gracious winning smile advanced to meet her mother-in-law. I had never admired her more than at that moment.

"'Why, have you heard of it, too?' she exclaimed.

"'Nadia! What are you doing here? Are you alone?'

"'Of course, dear. I came here to see the model. Didn't you?'

"'What model, child?'

"'Why, of our friend Mr. Dexter.'

"'That young man?'

"'Don't you know he's one of the greatest zoologists in the world, and Marribon has just put a model of him? Look, here it is!'

"I don't know that I'm any more nervous than other people; but it was, I confess, a trying moment when the old lady put up her eyeglasses and stared at me. Dear Nadia stuck her pretty head on one side in a critical way, and said:

"'I don't call it very good. Do you? It's so stiff and unnatural.'

"The old lady said nothing; she came a step nearer and raised her parasol. The old wretch was going to poke me!

"'Oh, but you mustn't touch it!' cried Nadia, turning pale. 'Look at the notice!'

"The old lady advanced her parasol. But at this moment one of the police appeared at her elbow.

"'You mustn't touch the figures, madame,' said he, and I blessed him for every word.

"Never a word did the old princess speak. She glared at me, she glared at Nadia, and she glared at the policeman—and she turned round and walked out of the gallery. The policeman followed her. Nadia softly clapped her hands; I sprang forward, seized her slim fingers, and kissed them.

"'Oh, we're not safe yet,' she said. 'My mother-in-law suspects. Luckily the place closes in a quarter of an hour and she can't do anything to-night; and the prince won't be back from Moscow till the day after to-morrow. Jack, there must be a real model of you by then.'

"I was amazed, but I listened to her instructions. Taking out her purse, she pressed it on me. I refused, but on finding that I had only a five-pound note with me, I was compelled to accept 20,000 roubles—(the X.'s are fabulously rich, you know.) I escorted the princess to a cab, and then I called on the proprietor for the exhibition.

"Well, to make a long story short, I—or rather the princess' roubles—(I kept one, and wear it now on my watch-chain—see, here it is!)—overcame Madame Marribon's surprise and swept away the scruples. I admitted that she might, not unnaturally never have heard of Professor Dexter; but I told her that the name was a household word in all cultivated circles in Europe and America, and I promised to pay her all expenses and 10,000 roubles if a portrait model of the great zoologist stood beside Kant in thirty-six hours. The result was that by six o'clock in the evening I was sitting in an armchair, and young M. Marribon was taking a cast of my features in plaster of paris. At this moment, however, there occurred an interruption which, if it had come a little sooner, would have ruined the whole affair.

"As I sat, covered with the plaster, except where holes were left for sight and breathing, I saw, to my consternation, the same policeman who had been in the gallery in the afternoon enter the room. He brought with him an official notice.

"'Order from the minister of the interior,' he said. 'You're to close tomorrow—Day of Intercession for the safe of the Tsar ordered, and all public exhibitions to be closed.

"I rejoiced to hear that—it smoothed my way; but I wished the policeman would take himself off.

"'Hullo!' he said.' Who have we here? I must have his name please.'

"'This is Mr. Dexter, the great zoologist.'

"'Who's he? Come, Monsieur Marribon, I must have that stuff off his face, you know. Why, he might be a Nihilist, or anybody you like, and me none the wiser, with that stuff on him.'

"'But, my dear sir,' pleaded Marribon, 'the stuff won't come off. If I try to remove it before it hardens, it will tear off his skin with it.' (That is the case with plaster of paris, you know, colonel.)

"'Can't help it,' said the brute. I've got my orders, and no distinction is made as to the effect on the skin. I must see his face.'

"'Oh, impossible!' cried Marribon. 'It would be barbarity! It will be dry in fifteen minutes.'

"'Then I'll wait,' said the man, and he sat down.

"As you may suppose, my brain was busy during those fifteen minutes. If I could speak alone to Marribon for an instant I saw my way. An idea struck me. Speaking as well as I could through the mouth-hole, I suggested that we were all probably thirsty, and I held out some roubles. Would the gentleman fetch some brandy? He wavered, and fell. He was gone five minutes. When he returned my face was uncovered, and Marribon richer by some valuable instructions and a couple of thousand more roubles.

"'Why, you've got a figure of him already!' cried the policeman.

"'Certainly we had; but Mr. Dexter was not satisfied with it, so I have taken advantage of his visit here to take a fresh cast.'

"The man looked suspicious.

"'Where's the old one?' he asked.

"'It's melted down,' said Marribon, suavely, as he poured out the brandy.

"That peril was past. My next visit was to Marribon's advertising agents. By next morning we flooded the town with posters, announcing the new and interesting addition to the exhibition. I received scores of congratulations on my distinction, and also on my singular modesty; for nobody in Russia had heard of my fame as a zoologist before. I accepted the kind word of my friends with gratitude and I invited a large company to lunch on the following day, proposing that we should afterwards go and view the model. My guests included Prince and Princess X. and the prince's mother.

"Behold us, then, the next day in the gallery! Nadia and I were somewhat nervous, the prince is glum as usual, the old lady very curious, and the rest of the company politely interested. There was the model; and I am bound to say that it was not a very good one.

"'Yes,' said Nadia, 'it is stiff and awkward. I said so before to your mother, prince.'

"'Did you?' he growled.

"Then the old lady, who had been examining the figure carefully, burst out in acid triumph:

"'It's not the figure I saw! What's the meaning of this? The one I saw had a red flower in its buttonhole. Nadia, what's the meaning of this?'

"The poor girl flushed crimson, but I interposed with great suavity:

"'You are perfectly right, princess. The figure is not the same. The one you saw was an experiment—a trial. It was considered unsatisfactory and melted down. This is a new one. Isn't that so, Monsieur Marribon?'

"'It is so, monsieur,' said Marribon, who was accompanying our distinguished party.

"'But,' cried the old lady, 'the one I saw was a thousand times better—it was most lifelike.'

"'Oh, did you think so, dear?' protested Nadia.

"Suddenly the prince turned furiously to Marribon.

"'Speak the truth,' he cried, "as you told it to me at the police bureau this morning!'

"The wretch looked at me with an expression of helpless apology; and behind him I saw that policeman!

"'Does Monsieur le Prince cite Monsieur Marribon to contradict me?' I asked haughtily.

"'You'll hear what he says—the truth, sir, not the lies you bribed him to tell.'

"Marribon had sold me! No doubt the policeman had smelt a rat, and the prince's threats had done the rest. In a trembling voice the wretch began to repeat the whole story of how I went to him. The old princess' eyes blazed with triumphant malice, the prince listened with a grim smile, and poor Nadia was as pale as a ghost; and as you may suppose, I was very uncomfortable.

"'Then,' asked the prince, 'there was no figure of this gentleman here at all the day before yesterday?'

"'None, your highness.'

"'Yet my mother saw one—and you, policeman, saw one?'

The policeman stepped forward.

"'I saw a figure, your highness,' said he.

"'I think we will ask Mr. Dexter to explain,' grinned the prince. 'Otherwise we must come to the conclusion that there was no figure.

"I had nothing to say.

"'And,' he pursued, 'that a trick has been played, and that the pretended figure was Mr. Dexter himself, who undertook this deception for motives not hard to guess,' and he stared cruelly at the hapless Nadia.

"Every one was silent. The truth seemed now to plain to be denied. I saw what would happen. My portrait would be ignominiously ordered off, I ran a risk of worse things, and I did not dare to think what would happen to poor Nadia, who, overcome by shame, began to shed tears.

"At this moment, a quiet, grave voice was heard. Everybody listened; for it proceeded from the Grand Duke A., who was (I forget whether I mentioned it before) one of my guests.

"'I can understand the princess' indignation and the emotion she shows,' said the grand duke. 'What I do not understand (and I desire to speak with all respect of Prince X.) is the remarkable scene to which we have been treated. What may be the motive of this rogue (he indicated Marribon) I do not know; but I am so happy as to be able to bear testimony, which will command, I venture to think, at least as much attention as that of a fellow who comes forward with such a tale. Pray, Prince X., are you willing to accept my word against that of your waxwork-maker and your policeman?'

"Every one was astounded, I most of all. Nadia looked up with a gleam of hope in her eyes. Of course, the prince could do nothing but bow deferentially, and say:

"'Whatever your imperial highness speaks to, needs, sir, no confirmation, and is affected by no contradiction.'

"'I am obliged to you,' said the grand duke stiffly. 'What I have to say is simply this—that in the morning of the day before yesterday, at the invitation of my good and distinguished friend, Mr. Dexter (whose merits the Tsar, no less than myself, is delighted to see recognized), I accompanied him to this gallery, incognito, for the purpose of giving him my opinion on the experimental figure. The figure was then in its place, and I inspected it in company with Mr. Dexter himself. It will hardly be suggested that I saw double.'

"He ceased. I dared not look at him. The prince and his mother were confounded, but they could say nothing. Nadia was full of gratitude, and began to thank the grand duke warmly.

"'I have only said what any gentleman would,' said the grand duke, bowing respectfully to her.

"In fact, we triumphed all along the line; and there stands the model of me to this day, unless, of course, it has been removed since I was there."

"And what became of Marribon?" I asked.

"He got twelve months, the rascal, for slander. The prince was forced to do it by the grand duke."

"But Jack," said the colonel, "why did the grand duke——"

"Oh, well," said Jack, "he was a very gallant man, and—this is between ourselves, you know, he had a tenderness for Nadia himself. She never returned it—why, of course, I don't know—which makes his conduct all the more handsome."

He rose and moved towards the door.

"She was a woman of great presence of mind, your princess," some one observed.

"Wonderful!" said Jack. "And of even more marvellous beauty," and he laid his hand one the door.

"What's become of her?" cried the colonel. "Do you ever see her now?"

"Never. I never shall again," said Jack, in tones of deep emotion, as he opened the door.

"But good gracious, what's happened to her?"

Jack turned round, as he was half way out of the room; he shook his head sadly, cleared his throat, and ejaculated one terrible word—"Siberia!"

And he shut the door.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Oddities of Advertising Seen in Washington and Its Suburbs.

A little stroll out of the highways of this city into the byways will perhaps reveal to the casual observer of business signs a variety of signs which no other city in the Union can support, remarks a writer in the Washington Post. The one apparent fact about the signs here is that there are elaborate business signs where there is utterly no signs of business being done within. One curious old colored woman up near the M street bridge displays outside of her very small and dirty shop, in a style of sign writing which would make a modern artist in that business green with envy, "Home-made pies, cakes, pigs' feet, cabbage, chidlings, pork steaks and chicken fish." A near neighbor storekeeper, keeping the same class of goods, but who is as interesting an Irish woman as the first one is an African, sells "New milk, skimmed milk, butter milk, and butter, fresh eggs, cream cheese, snow-balls and coal and wood."

The city has "A Grass cabinet maker," "John Hare, barber, shaving 5 cents," "A Stone carpenter," "A Horst livery stable, in the alley," and A. Wolf, tailor," while on the avenue is "artistical tailoring done."

In one of the oldest streets in Georgetown we have an undertaker who must keep up to the times at a lively pace, for he advertises on a card in his little window, "Novelties in coffins." Punctuation, or the lack of punctuation, plays a large part in this collection of signs. One colored man wishes to indicate that his place is open all night, but his sign reads, "Oysters in every style open all night, Raw box on the inside." One colored oyster dealer along the river front, who, in the absence of ability to spell "oyster," has tacked on the outside of his store three oyster shells, and beneath them has written, "By the Pt. Qt. or Gal. 25cts.," which seems to indicate it makes no difference how many you buy, the given quantity will cost 25 cents. Another oyster dealer in the same locality has six oyster shells tacked up and beneath them is written, "Ice, Oysters Wholes. & retail, by the pt. gal. & pigsfeet."

A lunch room in "Foggy Bottom," or "Smoky Hollow," displays a sign which reads, "Lunch room, meals at all hours, milk, cream, eggs, butter, butter-milk, soft drinks, ice cream, cakes, pies, bread, candy and varieties, etc." What the varieties would prove to be upon investigation are too numerous to mention in so short a space. Another "Foggy Bottom" establishment informs us that "Mrs. Rucker sells lard, 10 cents; pure lard, 12 cents." Pay your money and take your choice of lard or pure lard. "Sauerkraut" is spelled "sour krout" and "sour krowt." Along the famous old Water street of Georgetown one sees where "live bate is for sale within." A portable lunch room, in the form of a small, dilapidated baby carriage displays from its side, "Mary, the Wild Cat, fresh lunches, "Clamsonice." Mary, the Wild Cat, is the ancient colored man who runs the lunch room, or rather pushes it, and the last word in the sign is intended to represent "Clams on ice."

Another one of these portable lunch rooms has displayed from its side, "Oysters by the pt. qt. or gal. plate." "William Burns coal and wood" is a sign over in the northeast, which seems to indicate there is at least one man who has not missed his calling. An old Irishman in this same section, who has more land than he wants, but prefers to be his own real estate agent, has put up a sign on a lot he has for sale, which reads, "For sale, buy the owner." Near the Center Market is a butter merchant whose sign says "My eggs are strictly fresh," and an energetic shoemaker "Soals half solds while you wait." Miss Mary Sinclair in the northwest is a "modest and plain sewer." A gentleman from Georgetown has evidently served at the profession of tonsorial artist and dentist, for he has now combined two ways of making a living in a front room of his home, and advertises "hair cut and teeth pulled. Painless." Mr. W. D. Smead is probably a manufacturer of iron railings, but his sign reads, "manufactured of iron railings." Even in the grip cars of the Washington and Georgetown railroad the sign painters have failed to punctuate the signs in the end of the cars which tell where the cars were built, and the signs read, "John Stevenson Co., (limited) N. Y. don't talk to the gripman." But the sign which breaks all the bounds of consistency is in one of the toughest saloons in the "Division," and reads, "Where do you expect to spend eternity?"

SOUTHERN DRINKS.

Scuppernong Grape Wine and Other Nice Beverages.

[From Harper's Magazine.]

Down in the Mississippi the scuppernong grape finds its farthest southern foothold, I think—at least I have not found it farther away. Travelers to Asheville and Florida will remember that it is the wine that is served in that celebrated restaurant in North Carolina where the proprietor and waiters vie with one another in forcing "extras" and second portions of the nicest dishes upon the wayfarers. There can scarcely be such another restaurant as that. "Do have another quail," says the proprietor. "Let me give you some more of this scuppernong wine. It is made near here and it is perfectly pure." "Won't you take an orange or two into the cars with you?" or "Here's a bunch of fresh flowers to give to your ladies." The scuppernong wine has even more of that peculiar "fruity" flavor than the best California wines—a flavor that I am barbarian enough to prefer to the "pucker" of the imported claret. You may have it with your meals in Biloxi. And if you are a drinking man, which heaven forfend! you may have a "toddy" in the style that obtains from Virginia to farthermost Texas, and that has been imported to Arkansas, Missouri and the Indian Territory.

It was on the banks of the Arkansas river, in Indian territory, that I made the acquaintance of this method of—as a friend of mine would say—"spoiling good liquor." The famous Indian champion, Mr. Boudinot, introduced me to a planter whose cabins, side by side and joined by a single roof, formed the most picturesque home that I saw on that splendid river. I was introduced as plain "mister," but that did not go down there.

"Colonel Ralph," said the planter, "enjoy this year boundless panorama of nature. Feast yo' eyes, sah, on the beautiful river." Then, aside, "Wife, set out the mixin's in the back room. Colonel Ralph you are welcome to share with us the grand feast of scenery and nature's ornaments. But, sah, I think my wife has set something—just a little something—in the house. I dunno what it is, sah, but if you find it good I shall be delighted, sah."

So we went into the back room with this other Colonel Mulberry Sellers, and there, on the dining table stood a bottle, a bowl of water, three glasses and spoons and a glass pitcher full of spring water.

"Serve yourself to a toddy, colonel," said my host.

"I'll watch you first," said I. "I don't know what a toddy is."

"Don't know what a toddy is?" said the hospitable man. "Why, sir, that does seem strange to me. Back in gran' ole Virginia, sah, we children, were all brought up on it, sah. Every morning my reverend father and my sainted mother began the day with a toddy, sah, and as we children appeared my mother prepared for each one an especially tempered drink of the same, sah, putting, I regret to say, a little more water in mine than the others', because I was the youngest of the family."

As he spoke, he dipped some sugar into his glass, poured in a little water, sufficient to make a syrup when the two ingredients were stirred with a spoon, and then emptied in an Arkansas "stiffener" of whiskey—a jorum, as the English would say. That is the drink of the south, where drinking, without being carried to any excess that I ever witnessed, still remains a genteel accomplishment, as it was held to be by the English, Scotch and Irish, who were the progenitors of nearly all our southern brothers.

THE MUSKRAT AS A FOOD FISH.

A Minnesota Senator Goes in for Giving Him Proper Protection.

[From the Minneapolis Tribune.]

Senator Iltis of Chaska secured a favorable report to-day in the senate committee of the whole upon his proposed amendments to the game law. The amendments apparently deal only with mink, otter, beaver and muskrats, but really they are of considerable importance to the many varieties of food fish found so plentifully in the smaller lakes in the state. The new law provides that no mink, otter or beaver shall be killed between April and November, and that muskrats can be captured only during March and April. The laborious and scientifically constructed palace of the knowing little creatures must not be opened, destroyed or interfered with at any time. A fine of ten dollars or imprisonment for ten days is to be the penalty for every animal killed out of season and for every muskrat house injured.

Senator Iltis knows a good thing when he sees it, that is, in a culinary way, and he is very fond of muskrats when properly roasted before an open campfire. This piece of rare knowledge came to him while serving in the army in 1863.

"I was in camp at Medulla, near Mankato," said he, "and my partner was Mr. Zimmerman of St. Paul. He and I were accustomed to amuse ourselves, when we could get off, in trapping the rats, which were abundant in those days. We soon discovered that we could capture every rat in a colony. You know they have little channels leading to their houses, and by placing the traps in the leadways every rat would be caught, one after the other. It was during this winter that I learned how good a rat tasted when roasted on the end of a stick and before a campfire. We were funny looking fellows, seated before a fire and each gnawing from a whole rat, held in both hands.

"The rats had all been killed from one lake, and the next spring tons of decayed fish were washed up against the bank. This occurrence started an investigation on my part. I know of several instances where every fish in a lake has been killed during a winter by the farmers and others catching all the rats. Their houses and leadways maintain airholes in the ice and prevent the fish from smothering."

Senator Iltis was informed of the high appreciation in which muskrats were held as a food for epicures by the learned people living on the eastern shores of Maryland and Virginia. These people, to whom canvas-back ducks, diamond backed terrapin, soft shelled crabs, and like luxuries are a daily part of their bill of fare, esteem a well dressed fricasseed muskrat as being a superior dish.

"Oh, yes, I like them cooked that way, but they are better roasted," replied the senator from Carver county. "There is a man living up in my county who caught six thousand rats this fall. He saved the pelt, worth about six cents apiece, and threw away the carcasses which were much the more valuable part of the animal. I made up my mind that it was time to stop such wholesale slaughter."